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ABSTRACT

Suggesting the educational value of the television production of James Clavell's "Shogun," this pamphlet offers a synopsis of the story and a viewer's guide to responding to "Shogun." Following synopses of the five television broadcasts that comprise "Shogun," five units are presented for a viewer's educational study of the programs. These units discuss language, Japanese culture, ethnocentrism, history, and the interplay of cultures. Each unit contains questions, exercises, quotations, and lists of resources. (RL)

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VIEWER'S GUIDE

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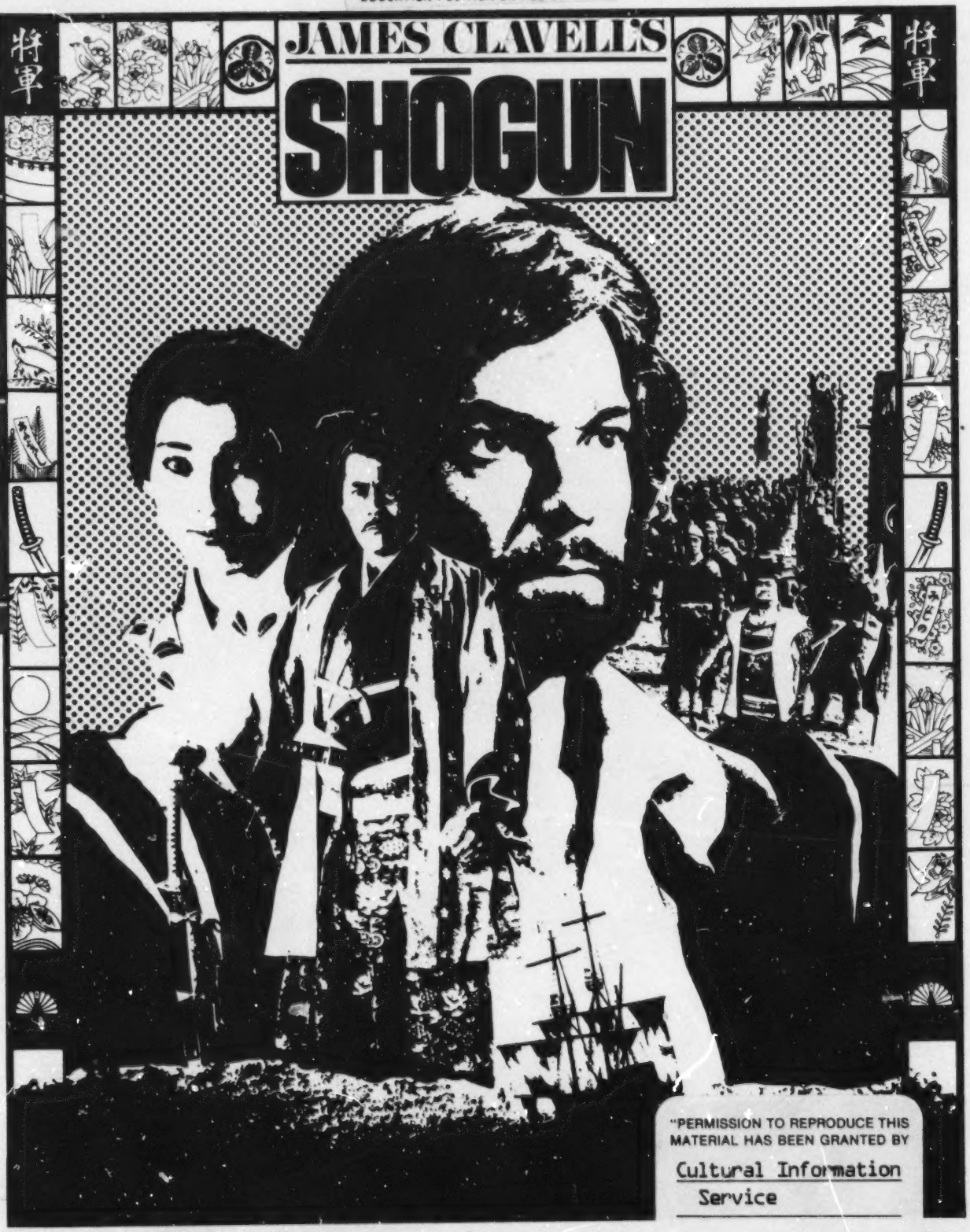
JAMES CLAVELL'S

SHŌGUN



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SHŌGUN

will be presented on the NBC Television Network
beginning Monday, September 15, 9-12 mid. NYT;
continuing Tuesday, September 16, 9-11 p.m. NYT;
Wednesday, September 17, 9-11 p.m. NYT;
Thursday, September 18, 9-11 p.m. NYT;
and concluding Friday, September 19, 8-11 p.m. NYT.
Check local listings to confirm the dates and times in your area.

"Shōgun" has received the recommendation of the National Education Association. The NEA said:
"Shōgun" is a culturally broadening adventure story set in feudal Japan three centuries ago. The drama initially reflects the alienation of a Western captive but ultimately portrays his gradual acceptance of Japanese culture. The viewer soon understands how the captive Westerner can come to appreciate and identify with the culture that at first seemed so alien and unacceptable. We strongly recommend this powerful and rich drama.

A good story can take us to places we've never been before. It can supply intellectual enrichment, exotic adventure, and self-discovery. James Clavell's best-selling novel *Shōgun* has provided these ingredients for people around the world; over 6 million copies of the book are in print. The story, set in 17th century Japan, is at once a thrilling tale of political intrigue, a dramatic depiction of how exposure to an Eastern society changes a Westerner, and a saga of romance across two cultures.

Starting the evening of September 15, NBC will present a 12-hour adaptation of James Clavell's *Shōgun*. The television miniseries is directed by Jerry London from a script by writer-producer Eric Bercovici. Clavell served as executive producer. The Paramount Television Production, in association with NBC Entertainment, was filmed entirely on location in Japan and features an international cast. With authentic settings and costumes, cinematographer Andrew Laszlo presents a smorgasbord of colorful sights and impressive imagery.

THE STORY

PART I, *September 15, 9-12 mid. NYT.*

The year is 1600. The *Erasmus,* a Dutch trader-warship under the command of English pilot John Blackthorne (Richard Chamberlain), is blown ashore during a violent storm near the village of Anjiro in the Japans. Blackthorne had hoped to trade in East Asia, but his dreams of riches are squelched when he discovers that Portuguese Jesuits have already established trade agreements with Japan. England and Portugal are at war, and the Jesuits consider the Protestant Englishman to be an enemy as well as a heretic.

The Japanese regard Blackthorne and his crew as barbarians and imprison them in a pit. The Westerners are shocked by the savagery of the village samurai culture, just as the Japanese are insulted by the European's bad manners. After confrontations with Omi (Yuki Meguro) and Lord Yabu (Frankie Sakai), ranking samurai of Anjiro, Blackthorne realizes that the lives of his crew depend upon his behavior.

Renamed "Anjin" (pilot) by his captors, Blackthorne is summoned to Osaka by Lord Toranaga (Toshiro Mifune), one of the daimyo (warlords) of the country. He travels there on a galley piloted by Rodrigues (John Rhys-Davies), a Portuguese navigator. After Blackthorne saves Rodrigues' life during a night squall, the two enemies strike up an uneasy friendship.

Five lords, the Council of Regents, rule Japan. The two most powerful are Lord Toranaga and his archrival Lord Ishido (Nobuo Kaneko). The Council is meeting at Osaka Castle, which is under Ishido's command. Also in Osaka is the Jesuit Mission where the Father Visitor of Asia, Carlo dell'Aqua (Alan Badel), and his chief negotiator, Father Alvito (Damien Thomas), who is fluent in Japanese, are alarmed by Toranaga's interest in Blackthorne. They fear the Englishman ("Ingeles") will be a threat to their lucrative trading in silks and gold.

At the castle, Blackthorne refuses to have Father Alvito serve as his interpreter to Lord Toranaga. Mariko (Yoko Shimada), a beautiful lady samurai and a Catholic convert, translates for him. Blackthorne explains he has come to Japan in peace to trade. The conversation is interrupted by the arrival of Lord Ishido, who orders Blackthorne detained in Osaka's "death row." In the wretched prison, the pilot meets Friar Domingo (Michael Hordern), a Franciscan priest. He tells Blackthorne of the Jesuit influence in Japan and of the *Black Ship,* which annually sails for Europe with enormous Jesuit profits from trade.

PART II, *September 16, 9-11 p.m. NYT.*

Toranaga has Blackthorne released from prison and orders him to tell about his voyage and his country. The Japanese leader listens intently as the Englishman draws a map of the world and explains Portugal's claims to Japan. The Jesuits, hearing of this exchange and fearful for their interests, arrange for Blackthorne to be assassinated. The plot fails. Lord Toranaga's interest in Blackthorne, now called "Anjin-san" (honorable pilot), increases.

The political rivalry between Ishido and Toranaga intensifies and the latter decides to leave Osaka Castle, without Ishido's permission, by disguising himself as a woman. When the suspicious Ishido stops the departure party at the gate, Blackthorne pretends to be mad in order to distract attention from Toranaga, his protector. In the resulting chaos, Mariko saves the Anjin-san's life. The two begin to see each other in a new light.

The departure from Osaka is bloody and costly in samurai lives. Finally, in order to get out of the harbor, Toranaga bargains with Captain Ferriera (Vladek Sheybal), captain of the Portuguese *Black Ship,* surrendering Blackthorne to him in the process. But Rodrigues helps the Ingeles escape.

Back in Anjiro, Lord Toranaga rewards Blackthorne for his bravery by making him "hatamoto," a retainer on his personal staff with special privileges and protections. He orders the Englishman to learn Japanese. To make sure he does, Lord Yabu decrees that the village will be burned and all its inhabitants crucified if the Anjin-san can't speak Japanese within six months.

PART III, *September 17, 9-11 p.m. NYT.*

Blackthorne struggles to understand samurai etiquette and attitudes toward human life, honor, and duty. Mariko, assigned as his teacher and translator, explains that he must be concerned only with the present and leave "karma to karma."

Still, the threat to the village haunts the Englishman. He asks Lord Yabu to rescind his decree. When Yabu refuses, Blackthorne declares he can not live with the shame of having the village on his conscience and threatens to commit suicide in the honored Japanese tradition. His attempt fails only because Omi physically restrains him. Mariko tells Blackthorne that he is now "reborn." Every day he becomes more and more Japanese.

Mariko continues to tutor Blackthorne in the language. Through Mariko and his consort Fujiko (Hiromi Senno), he learns about the Japanese maze of rituals and customs. When he declares his affection for Mariko openly, she reminds him that she is married and that adultery is punishable by death.

Mariko's husband Buntaro (Hideo Takamatsu) arrives in Anjiro. At dinner he demonstrates his skill as a master archer. Drunk on sake, he forces Mariko to tell of her shameful background as the daughter of a traitor. Later he beats her. Custom prevents Blackthorne from helping her.

The significance of his word as the head of a household is impressed upon Blackthorne when the Old Gardener (Akira Sera) is put to death for removing a rotting pheasant that the Anjin-san had ordered left alone until he was ready to eat it.

It is apparent that civil war is coming to Japan and the empire will be destroyed unless Lord Toranaga petitions the Emperor to make him Shōgun, supreme military ruler. Toranaga tells Blackthorne to prepare his ship for battle but forbids him from attacking the Jesuits' *Black Ship*.

An earthquake rocks the village as they talk. Toranaga falls into a crevice opened by the quake, and Blackthorne once again saves Toranaga's life. Later amid great pomp and ceremony, the warlord repays the Englishman with the highest honor he can bestow. He elevates the Anjin-san to the warrior class of samurai.

PART IV, *September 18, 9-11 p.m. NYT.*

While traveling to the city of Yedo, Lord Toranaga is ordered to Osaka by the Council of Regents. Clearly the power struggle is coming to a head. For Mariko and Blackthorne, this is a time when their love blooms. Yet, she insists it must all end at Yedo's First Bridge. Reluctantly, he agrees.

On the Portuguese frigate, Rodrigues learns from Father Alvito that Toranaga is giving the *Erasmus* back to the Ingeles. He realizes that the swift vessel could easily overtake the *Black Ship*, capture its cargo, and then hold the balance of power in the area. Convinced that his sometime friend must be stopped, Rodrigues goes to kill him, but the Anjin-san's samurai guards seize his weapons. The experience teaches Blackthorne another important rule—not to trust anyone.

In Yedo, Blackthorne visits the five remaining members of his crew, who are living in a state of squalor. He needs them to sail the *Erasmus* but feels the same aversion toward them that the Japanese originally felt toward him and the crew.

During the journey to Yedo, Lord Toranaga had told Mariko's husband to make peace with her. In order to do so, Buntaro had prepared a tea ceremony for her. Now Toranaga is both shocked and outraged when Blackthorne asks him to grant Mariko a divorce so he can marry her. The warlord forbids him to ever speak of marriage to Mariko again.

Part V, *September 19, 8-11 p.m. NYT.*

Mariko and Blackthorne learn of a plot approved by Lord Ishido to have one of the Christian lords on the Council of Regents poisoned. At the site of a new cathedral in Yedo, Mariko shares this information with Father Alvito in exchange for the Jesuit's promise to protect the Anjin-san.

The English crew move the *Erasmus* back to Anjiro, and Blackthorne proceeds to Osaka. He is summoned to the castle for a reception in honor of the Lady Ochiba (Atsuko Sano), mother of the heir. He watches as Mariko asks permission to leave with other women from Lord Toranaga's entourage. Lord Ishido refuses her request. Because she is being prevented from doing her duty to her liege lord Toranaga, Mariko declares she is bound by her honor to commit seppuku (ritual suicide) at sunset. At the last minute, Lord Ishido changes his decision.

In the castle, Ishido enlists Lord Yabu's help against Toranaga. During the night, Yabu, the traitor, leads groups of Toranaga's samurai to their deaths as Ishido's forces stage a guerrilla attack. Mariko, Blackthorne, and the women hostages are trapped in Toranaga's secret room. When an explosion rips through the door, Mariko is killed and Blackthorne is temporarily blinded.

Heartbroken, the Anjin-san attends the elaborate state funeral of his beloved lady samurai. Then, to Blackthorne's surprise, Father dell'Aqua escorts him to the Osaka wharf for his voyage to Anjiro. They are met by Captain Ferriera, who wants to execute the English pilot. When Ferriera is killed by samurai archers, dell'Aqua appoints Rodrigues captain of the *Black Ship*.

Back in Anjiro, Blackthorne discovers that the *Erasmus* has been totally destroyed by fire. Vinck (George Innes), his chief mate, goes mad upon realizing they are beached forever in the Japans.

Lord Toranaga arrives to prepare for the war against Ishido. Lord Yabu, his treachery discovered, commits seppuku. Toranaga gives the Anjin-san the village of Anjiro as his fief. He also produces a letter to him from Mariko, written before she left for Osaka. His sight regained, Blackthorne reads her explanations for what has happened. "This ship is nothing," she writes, "Build another ship and build another life, my love." In the final scenes, Blackthorne is joyously doing just that as Lord Toranaga watches from a nearby hill. The samurai war chief says: "Mariko, it was your karma to die gloriously and live forever. Anjin-san, my friend, it is your karma never to leave this land. And my karma—which I did not choose—my karma is to become Shōgun."

JAPANESE WORDS IN JAMES CLAVELL'S SHŌGUN

Most Japanese verbs end in *masu*. To make a question, you just add *ka*. "Wakarimasu ka" —do you understand? "Wakarimasu"—I understand. To make the verb negative, you just change *masu* to *masen*. "Wakarimasen" —I do not understand.
—Mariko to Blackthorne

Arigato (ari-gat-o)	Thank you	Isogi (e-so-gi)	Hurry
Domo (doe-mo)	Thank you or please	Koi (coy)	Come (command)
Dooshita noda (doe-sta-noda)	What's the matter?	Konbanwa (con-ban-wa)	Good Evening
Dozo (doe-zo)	Please	Konnichiwa (con-nichi-wa)	Good Day
Hai (hi)	Yes	Kudasai (ku-da-si)	Please
Honto (hon-to)	Truth	Matte (matt-te)	Wait
Iye (e-yeh)	No	Sama (sam-a)	Lord
Ima (e-ma)	Now, at once	San	honorable (added to names as politeness)

TO VIEWERS

"Shōgun" is high-class entertainment but it is also a journey with ample educational value. This television production elicits our involvement and challenges us to become something more than passive spectators.

This Viewer's Guide is organized around units containing questions, exercises, and quotations. They are designed to serve as a passport into the story and the culture of Japan. Each section includes a list of resources for further study.

Few groups will have time to go through all the questions during the week of the broadcasts. You may want to have an introductory get-together before the airings to determine the areas of major interest to your group. Duplicate the relevant materials so that everyone can refer to them while watching the television presentation.

Because "Shōgun" realistically depicts the samurai culture of 17th century Japan, there are some scenes of violence in the television production. Discussion leaders may want to alert people to this dimension of the drama.

Many viewers will enjoy supplementing their experience of the TV miniseries by reading James Clavell's *Shōgun* (Atheneum, 1975), now available as a Dell paperback. They may also be interested in *The Making of James Clavell's Shōgun*, published by Delta Books with a foreword by Clavell. Packed with photographs, it traces the evolution of the television production.

Some ambitious groups might view "Shōgun" as an occasion for informal anthropological field work. Make observations on Japanese life—the housing arrangements, eating habits, sexual practices, reactions to death, ways of greeting strangers, bodily adornment, decorative arts, division of labor, etiquette, folklore, funeral rites, gestures, gift-giving rituals, attitudes toward hygiene, language, law, status differentiation, etc. In this regard the TV program can serve as a starting point for an extended study of Japanese culture. The bibliographies provide leads to more information.

Finally, those who are especially interested in a personal experience with "Shōgun" and Japan may want to keep a diary in which they record their feelings, reflections, and insights gained from the TV presentation. A diary of this kind can be a vehicle for personal growth.

For example, during and after each episode, record your impressions. Try writing "It struck me that.....while I watched this scene." Or "I realized.....from these characters." Recall an event from your own experience that is similar to what happens in the story. Write descriptions of moments in the movie which impressed you. Put yourself in the picture —a conversation, a ritual—and imagine how you might feel if you were there. You can also use your diary to make lists of interests generated by "Shōgun." Then pursue them when you have time.

I. THE INTERPLAY OF CULTURES

> The best reason for exposing oneself to foreign ways is to generate a sense of vitality and awareness—an interest in life which can come only when one lives through the shock of contrast and difference.
>
> —Edward T. Hall, anthropologist

"Shōgun" is a story about the interplay of cultures. Eric Bercovici's screenplay puts us as viewers into Blackthorne's shoes. We see the action from his perspective. With him, we experience culture shock—that certain uneasiness brought about by exposure to an alien environment. Another motif in the TV miniseries is the clash of cultures within individuals whose loyalties are split and whose backgrounds may dictate different actions from those that present circumstances call for. In each instance, "Shōgun" gives us a chance to rehearse what it is like to encounter a way of life sharply different from our own.

1. Social critic Alvin Toffler states: "Culture shock is what happens when a traveler suddenly finds himself in a place where yes may mean no...where laughter may signify anger. It is what happens when the familiar psychological cues that help an individual to function in society are suddenly withdrawn and replaced by new ones that are strange or incomprehensible." Rank the following according to the degree of discomfort they seem to cause Blackthorne. Then rank them according to the amount of culture shock they would cause you.
   - ___not being able to express himself completely
   - ___the inability to understand Japanese
   - ___not knowing local customs and rules for proper behavior
   - ___not comprehending the vision of life based on karma
   - ___being exposed to a value system that has a different attitude toward life and death
   - ___the separation that comes from being an outsider
2. Have you ever been in a situation where you didn't know the appropriate behavior (for example, at a wedding in which the ceremony is unfamiliar)? How did you find out what to do?
3. Have you ever had an experience in a different country or a subculture in the United States that caused you to feel culture shock? What values or practices did you encounter that were unlike your own? What were your reactions?
4. Which incidents in his introduction to Japan cause Blackthorne the most distress and confusion? Which ones do you find most difficult to accept?
5. What personal qualities does Blackthorne possess which help him adapt to his situation?
6. Discuss aspects of American culture that might cause culture shock to a Japanese visitor.
7. List the characters in the story who seem to experience a clash of cultures within themselves. Do you think they are stronger persons as a result of this burden? With whom do you identify? Why?
8. Novelist André Gide once remarked: "We can never discover new continents until we have the courage to lose sight of all coasts." How does this comment relate to the television production?

Resources for Further Exploration

Hall, Edward T. *Beyond Culture*. Anchor Press/Doubleday, New York, 1976.

Toffler, Alvin. *Future Shock*. Random House, New York, 1970.

II. LANGUAGE

To a greater or lesser degree, every language offers its own reading of life.

—George Steiner, literary critic

The TV dramatization of James Clavell's "Shōgun" provides an unusual opportunity for viewers to become familiar with the Japanese language. Throughout the miniseries, the Japanese characters converse in Japanese. Thus, without benefit of subtitles, we find ourselves in the same predicament as Blackthorne. In order to understand what is going on, we have to rely on interpreters and the Japanese phrases we can pick up along the way. And, when words fail, we have to learn to read body language, gesture, and expression.

1. If you have been in a foreign country where you did not speak the language, or if you have related to a foreigner who did not speak English, how did this language problem affect your interaction? What difficulties arose? How were they overcome or resolved?
2. Blackthorne has several interpreters: Father Sebastio, Father Alvito, Mariko, Urano, and Brother Michael. Would you trust an adversary to translate for you? What human relations skills must a good interpreter have?
3. Japanese scholar Masao Kunshiro notes: "English is a language intended strictly for communication. Japanese is primarily interested in feeling out the other person's mood, in order to work out one's own course of action based on one's impressions." Find instances where this difference between English and Japanese is dramatized in the story.
4. Why do you think Blackthorne and Mariko express their love for each other in Latin-tinged phraseology?
5. Screenplay writer Eric Bercovici told *Cultural Information Service* in an interview: "Toranaga represents the Japanese mind. The man who gains the most is the man whose thoughts no one else can penetrate or second guess." How do Toranaga's speeches and his treatment of Blackthorne prove or disprove this statement?
6. Raymond J. Cormier, a language professor, has observed: "Language learning is mind-expanding, for it offers deeper perceptions of the self and of one's place in the world." Do you think American schools should be more strict in their foreign language requirements? Why or why not?
7. Mariko tells Blackthorne: "All European languages are much more difficult than Japanese. Japanese is really very simple." Do you agree or disagree? Share your reactions to the filmmakers' decision to use so much Japanese in the TV miniseries. What are the positive results of this decision?

Resources for Further Exploration

Miller, Roy Andrew. *The Japanese Language*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1970.

Steiner, George. *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*. Oxford University Press, New York, 1975.

III. JAPANESE CULTURE

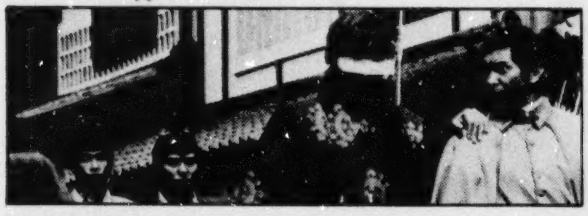
Pity the man who cannot master a feeling of awe, ...at the thought of visiting Japan...if you want to turn your first meeting into a love-match, do not leave a thing to chance...the outcome will depend in good measure on your own resources ...Make allowances for maxims such as: Time is of no account, or Language serves for hiding one's thoughts.

—Bernard Rudofsky, *The Kimono Mind*

For many viewers, "Shōgun" will be their first exposure to Japanese culture. The story subtly draws us into a vivid encounter with this approach to life. Individuals and groups may want to explore further the fascinating cultural expressions alluded to in the drama: the tea ceremony, spontaneous poetry, Japanese architecture, landscape gardening, and Zen archery. Others might want to examine in depth the Japanese code of etiquette during this period, the understanding of honor, the ritual of bathing, the place of women in samurai society, sexual mores, or the act of seppuku.

1. How does Mariko's view of time differ from Blackthorne's?
2. The Japanese bath originated as ritual purification. Hence it is seen as a positive, pleasurable act instead of a chore. Europeans of Blackthorne's time avoided bathing; they thought it would make them ill. What does each culture's view of bathing say about its vision of life?
3. Pay close attention to the tea ceremony in the film. Then research how this and other exercises express a Zen approach to reality.
4. Feudal Japan was organized into an intricate system of authorities and responsibilities. What is gained and what is lost in a society in which individuals can act only according to rules established for their generation, sex, and class?
5. "The one thing we do not have is privacy," Mariko tells Blackthorne. "So we must learn to create our own. We are taught from childhood to disappear within ourselves, to grow impenetrable walls behind which we live." How do Japanese language and customs confirm this point? Would you feel comfortable living in a house with paper-thin walls and few doors? How do you create privacy in your life?
6. What does Mariko mean when she talks about karma? Why is this concept hard for Blackthorne to understand?
7. Japan watcher Thomas Hoover writes: "Zen culture has been devised over the centuries to bring us in touch with a portion of ourselves we in the West scarcely know—our non-rational, nonverbal side." Which incidents in the TV program best accomplish this for you?
8. Discuss how the approaches to sex and love differ in the West and the East, according to "Shōgun." What does Blackthorne learn in this regard from Mariko? What does he teach her?

9. How does the Japanese arrangement of a room differ from a Western room arrangement? Do you think this architectural style intensifies people's experiences of each other?
10. In his book *Japan Today*, William H. Forbis writes: "In Japan a sinner feels shame brought on by the judgment of society, rather than guilt inflicted by his own conscience." Do you think this is a valid contrast between the East and the West? Discuss how this dynamic works, using Blackthorne's and Mariko's actions as examples.
11. Ruth Benedict in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* states: "American condemnation of suicide makes self-destruction only a desperate submission to despair, but the Japanese respect for it allows it to be an honorable and purposeful act." What does Blackthorne learn about himself in his attempt to commit suicide? In what ways is he "reborn" afterward?
12. In *The Nobility of Failure*, Ivan Morris notes that in the Western world there are very few heroes who have ended their lives by suicide. In Japan, the opposite is true. "From the time of the sanguinary civil wars in the 12th century, the particular method that became associated with the samurai tradition was harakiri, an excruciatingly painful form of self-torture which served as conclusive evidence that, though he had finally failed his purpose, here was a man who could be respected by friend and enemy alike for his physical courage, determination and sincerity." Have a debate on this statement: Seppuku is an honorable act.



Resources for Further Exploration

Barber, Bernard. *Sensual Water: A Celebration of Bathing*. Contemporary Books, Chicago, 1978.

Benedict, Ruth. *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture*. Meridian/New American Library, New York, 1974.

Clavell, James. *Shōgun*. Dell, New York, 1980.

Doi, Takeo; John Bester, translator. *The Anatomy of Dependence*. Kodansha International, Tokyo, 1973.

Forbis, William. *Japan Today: People, Places and Power*. Harper & Row, New York, 1975.

Hasegawa, Nyozekan; John Bester, translator. *The Japanese Character: A Cultural Profile*. Kodansha International, Tokyo, 1966.

Hoover, Thomas. *Zen Culture*. Random House, New York, 1977.

Ishimoto, Kiyoko. *The Japanese House*. Crown, New York, 1963.

Minear, Richard A., editor. *Through Japanese Eyes*. Praeger, New York, 1974.

Morris, Ivan. *The Nobility of Failure: Tragic Heroes in the History of Japan*. Holt Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1975.

Nakane, Chie. *Japanese Society*. University of California Press, Berkeley, 1970.

Okakura, Kakuzo. *The Book of Tea*. Dover, New York, 1964.

IV. ETHNOCENTRISM

> Let us stop the continents from hurling epithets at each other, and be sadder if not wiser by the mutual gain of half a hemisphere. We have developed along different lines, but there is no reason why one should not supplement the other.
>
> —Kakuzo Okakura, *The Book of Tea*

In the clash between the two cultures, East and West, sparks of ethnocentrism (the feeling that one's own culture or country is the best, most natural, right, and important) come from both sides. The Japanese, who trace their origins to the celestial spirits, are convinced that the Europeans are "barbarians." Blackthorne's crew and other Westerners use derogatory terms to refer to the Japanese. "Shōgun," then, encourages viewers to consider the negative force of ethnocentrism and think about the positive values of cross-cultural understanding.

1. What keeps Blackthorne's crew from appreciating Japanese culture? If you were in their position, how do you think you would act? In what ways are they like tourists?
2. A Confucian saying goes: "Human beings draw close to one another by their common nature, but habits and customs keep them apart." Talk about scenes in the story in which the "common nature" of human beings transcends customs. Then point out instances in which customs keep people apart.
3. Mariko tells Blackthorne: "I am a Christian, but first I am a Japanese." Would you identify yourself first by your nationality, your vocation, or your religion?
4. Singer/songwriter Leonard Cohen has written: "To discover the truth in anything that is alien first dispense with the indispensible in your own vision." What would you have to change about yourself first in order to identify with another culture?
5. Father Alvito at one point remarks: "Their language is as natural to me as my own—and still they are a mystery." He does not think Blackthorne will ever learn enough to understand the Japanese. Are these ethnocentric attitudes?
6. Former diplomat Edwin O. Reischauer has stated: "Education, as it is presently conducted in this country—and in every other country in the world, for that matter—is not moving rapidly enough in the right direction to produce the knowledge about the outside world and the attitudes toward other peoples that may be essential for human survival within a generation or two." What can the schools and other institutions do to correct this situation?

Resources for Further Exploration

Ember, Carol R. and Melvin Ember. *Cultural Anthropology*. Prentice Hall, Inc. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1977.

Reischauer, Edwin O. *Toward the 21st Century: Education for a Changing World*. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1973.

V. HISTORY

> I'm not a historian. I'm a story-teller. I took legends—because who knows what's real and what isn't—and weaved a story around them.
>
> —James Clavell, author of *Shōgun*

Although "Shōgun" is fiction, the story is drawn from real persons and events in 17th century Japan. The Blackthorne character is based on Will Adams, an English pilot of a Dutch ship that reached Japan in 1600. Lord Toranaga is a fictionalization of Ieyasu (1542-1616), the first Tokugawa Shōgun. Their relationship in the TV movie bears some similarity to Adams' service to Ieyasu as an advisor in matters of commerce, navigation, and shipbuilding. The movie's sets, costumes, rituals, and customs are historically accurate reflections of this period. As a result, "Shōgun" is an interesting gateway into the history of 17th century Japan.

1. Have members of your group present reports on Magellan's Pass, the Treaty of Saragossa, and the importance of the introduction of firearms into Japan.
2. When did the Portuguese first arrive in Japan? What role did Francis Xavier and other Jesuits play? When and why did Japanese persecution of Christians begin?
3. Research the social, economic, and political systems of feudal Japan. How did they differ from feudal Europe?
4. The reunification of Japan in the latter half of the 16th century is attributed to three great leaders: Oda Nobunaga (1534-1582), Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536-1598), and Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542-1616). The differences in their styles are reflected in a popular story. Each is said to have been contemplating a cuckoo. Nobunaga said, "If the cuckoo doesn't sing, I'll kill him." Hideyoshi said, "If the cuckoo doesn't sing, I'll make him." And Ieyasu said, "If the cuckoo doesn't sing, I'll wait until he does." Investigate the career of each leader and the changes they brought to Japan.
5. Talk about the samurai code of honor as revealed in "Shōgun."

Resources for Further Exploration

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